

second verse from LB 505 last week. We talked about the issue of how we're going to spend additional money in this area and, once again, I'm hesitant to get in front of a train that's done in the name of rural health, but I still have a concern. There's three basic concerns. One is the fact that this is another program and it's my attitude that we ought to have one program dealing with the rural health areas, not a proliferation of some in the Office of Rural Health, some in the Med Center, some other department. I mean, I think you need to have one place in government dispensing these funds and managing these funds. That's one concern. Second is the simple fact in the big picture, when you look at overall student assistance, Nebraska historically ranks very low, quite honestly, and it's always been my preference to look on the...to work on the big area of student assistance before we start piecemealing it off like this. And, third, is the simple frustration that the state already spends a good number of dollars on health care education right now and my frustration on both LB 505 and LB 152, it appears at least that we have found a topic that certainly sells like hot cakes and I certainly understand that in the area of rural health and we certainly latched on to that in taking that to the bank. That's a concern I have. I'd like to find some way from within to fund some of these programs with all the existing we're now using, but I mean that is something that's not new in the Legislature. The concerns are the same as LB 505. For that reason I'll be voting "no" and Senator Dierks is the principal sponsor. If he wants to respond, he can have the balance of my opening. Then I'd like to withdraw the motion. Senator Dierks?

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Dierks.

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the body. I understand the frustrations that Senator Moore goes through because he deals with these issues daily as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, but I think with this piece of legislation we have a win/win situation. It's a kind of a...it's a kind of a piece of legislation that provides value and help to all of Nebraska. It provides for funding for programs that are instituted in the urban part of our state and that program, that Family Practice Residency Program in both Clarkson and Creighton will help with the care for indigent people in our state; provides a tremendous service to the state. And then, of course, the value-added is where we make provisions for these students to return to rural Nebraska to practice,